

Farewell

Chapter Nineteen

With haste, the elder gentlemen guided the group out of the room, making their way through the bustling docks. An energy seemed to come from some of the boys, their steps quickening as they trailed behind Gary and his companions. All eyes were upon them as they crossed the area, passing by numerous vessels being loaded with cargo. Being the youngest individuals around, they naturally drew attention and stood out amid the crowd.

"Ay, jit , we stra hittin' the Quarter! Ain't no stoppin us tonight, man!" Smiffy snapped his fingers and said with excitement

"Calm down Smiffy, we haven't even got there." Gabriel said.

"Ah, I've heard tell that they've got the finest woa's in that place, mate! Those lassies are like knockout punches, stunning and simply irresistible! I'll be makin' me way there to see it for meself and to ensure they're up to me high standards, or else it'll be a right bleedin' disappointment!" Jerm's rubbed his hands together.

"Relax. You don't get any girls anyway." Gabriel laughed.

Following a brief stroll, the group neared an individual donning a top hat and black suspenders, stationed before a lengthy lineup of ships. A clipboard in hand, he appeared to be someone of significance.

"That's Marco Villasenor, he controls the docks." Rico explained, nudging Jakob to look.

“What can I do for you gents?” The man asked staring down at his clipboard.

“We are here to collect our ship and head south.” Gary said like the man should have known who he was.

“Hold on there now, you know the fees. Name please.” The man continued to be non-chalet and not looking up to Gary.

“You know me.” Gary responded annoyed and the man finally looked up. Once he saw it was Gary, he had a slight smirk and asked, **“Are you a traveling man?”**

“From west to east.” Gary quickly responded.

“Do Ra Me.” The man responded and gave him a head nod to pass minus the fees, continuing to the next person in line. The boys were curious about what that interaction was all about, but they didn’t pay too much mind to it. Their stomachs had a warm feeling of excitement, the fact that their home was gone didn’t matter anymore, they moved on quickly, they were all on a new journey. All the ships stunned them as they walked down the final port. Ships of all colors and sizes lined both sides of the port and one final ship sat at the end that dwarfed the rest of them. However, they quickly realized that they were missing one person. Gabriel looked back and Rico was still standing back by the man.

“Rico what are you doing, come on.” Gabriel said as the boys ran back to him.

“I don’t think I can go.” Rico said with a smile.

“Why not?” Jakob asked confused

“You see all the ships” He put his hands up, **“I want to own them all one day.”**

Gary interrupted and spoke directly to the man

“Villasenor, will you look after the boy?”

“If he’s willing to learn, I’ll take him.” The man concluded and went back to his business.

“Whoever is coming needs to come now. We weigh anchor in four bells.”

Gary turned away and strode off. Once again, the boys bid farewell to yet another friend, leaving them with a dwindling group of four. Jakob took the lead, guiding the boys in pursuit of Gary, who stood at the base of the largest vessel in the harbor. Approaching the ship, it was indeed the largest, but it was lacking. The hull bore a faded red color, reminiscent of its age spanning several centuries. The prow had an intricately carved figurehead depicting a formidable shark, its mouth menacingly open, although with a few missing teeth. The sails, billowing in the wind, were a pitch-black shade, covered with patched-up areas and numerous holes. The vessel's patterned gold moldings, once impressive, now hung loosely, on the verge of falling off.

"This is my queen, The Dauntless," declared Gary proudly, pointing to the ship.

"Tis is ya queen? Are you having a laugh, mate? She's not exactly what I'd call a knockout, if you know what I mean." Jerms muttered under his breath, mocking the ship, only to be swiftly jabbed in the ribs by Gabriel. Gary pivoted and fixed his eyes on the boys. In a swift and coordinated movement, three more men emerged from the ship, each bearing a weathered denim vest. Every eye in the vicinity was drawn to the vest, known as The Cut, which held a special meaning. Jakob immediately noticed the intricate arrangement of patches on the front of the Cut. The small lettering on the right indicated the title **"Captain"** on Gary's Cut. On the left side, there were three small logos that puzzled Jakob, he had never seen them before. The first logo depicted a circular design with a serpent coiled in a loop, devouring its own tail. The second

logo featured a six-pointed star with alternating long and short points. The last symbol showcased a small circle with a cross at the bottom, resembling an upside-down T. From within the shape, there were two curved lines resembling horns or a crescent moon on both sides. While most the striking emblem proudly stood out. On the back of the garment, consisted of a prominent letter M intersected by two menacing cutlasses. Without hesitation, Jakob understood who these men truly were.

“Wait a minute, Your pirates!” Jakob shouted.

“We are The Men of Mayhem.” Gary declared his piracy.

“Fresh meat for the grinders boys.” One of the men said.

“These are some decent looking prospects you got B.” The larger of the men finished.

Filled with excitement and a burning sense of adventure, the boys glowed with enthusiasm as they eagerly bounded onto the pirate ship, just moments before it embarked on its voyage. However, little did they anticipate that their initial enthusiasm would soon be calmed by the realities of life at sea. The pirate's life, they would soon discover, held the promise of glory and riches, but it also demanded relentless work and perseverance.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

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